



THE PROPHECY OF DANIEL

Lesson Number 31



TRANSLATION LEGEND: ASV=American Standard Version (1901), BBE=Bible in Basic English (1949), DRA=Douay-Rheims (1899), ESV=English Standard Version (2001), KJV=King James Version (1611), NKJV=New King James Version (1982), NAB=New American Bible, NASB=New American Standard Bible (1977), NAU=New American Standard Bible (1995), NIB=New International Bible, NIV=New International Version (1984), NJB=New Jerusalem Bible, NLT=New Living Translation, NRSV=New Revised Standard Version (1989), RSV=Revised Standard Version (1952), TNK=JPS Tanakj (1985), YLT=Young's Literal Translation (1862).

----- Bible Translation Codes with Identification -----

AN ANGEL BATTLES HIS WAY TO EARTH WITH A UNIQUE INTERPRETATION

“^{10:10} And, behold, an hand touched me, which set me upon my knees and upon the palms of my hands. ¹¹ And he said unto me, O Daniel, a man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak unto thee, and stand upright: for unto thee am I now sent. And when he had spoken this word unto me, I stood trembling. ¹² Then said he unto me, Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words. ¹³ But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia. ¹⁴ Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days: for yet the vision is for many days. ¹⁵ And when he had spoken such words unto me, I set my face toward the ground, and I became dumb. ¹⁶ And, behold, one like the similitude of the sons of men touched my lips: then I opened my mouth, and spake, and said unto him that stood before me, O my lord, by the vision my sorrows are turned upon me, and I have retained no strength. ¹⁷ For how can the servant of this my lord talk with this my lord? for as for me, straightway there remained no strength in me, neither is there breath left in me. ¹⁸ Then there came again and touched me one like the appearance of a man, and he strengthened me, ¹⁹ And said, O man greatly beloved, fear not: peace be unto thee, be strong, yea, be strong. And when he had spoken unto me, I was strengthened, and said, Let my lord speak; for thou hast strengthened me. ²⁰ Then said he, Knowest thou wherefore I come unto thee? and now will I return to fight with the prince of Persia: and when I am gone forth, lo, the prince of Grecia shall come. ²¹ But I will show thee that which is noted in the scripture of truth: and there is none that holdeth with me in these things, but Michael your prince.” ^{KJV} (Dan 10:10-21)

INTRODUCTION

Daniel has been brought into contact with the powers of heaven. A holy angel is confronting him – not in vision only, but with words. The experience has been devastating to the flesh, for flesh is not able to endure such lofty communications. Sin has had a calculated affect upon the Adamic, or human,

nature. Although it was not clearly known in Daniel's day, “*flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God*” (1 Cor 15:50). This not only applies to “*the world to come,*” but present kingdom experiences as well. “*Flesh and blood*” cannot be “*taught by God*” (John 6:45), see “*Him who is invisible*” (Heb 11:27), be

“*led by the Spirit*” (Rom 8:14), or “*come to*” Jesus to be taught by Him (Matt 11:28).

The Spirit is very specific about this matter. “*So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God*” (Rom 8:8). Rather than “*the flesh*” being the vehicle

More was involved in Daniel's prayer being answered than could be detected by natural means, by Given O. Blakely

OUTLINE

- ▶ HE TOUCHED ME (10:10)
- ▶ UNDERSTAND AND STAND UP (10:11)
- ▶ FROM THE FIRST DAY (10:12)
- ▶ THE PRINCE OF PERSIA (10:13)
- ▶ TO MAKE THEE UNDERSTAND (10:14)
- ▶ I BECAME DUMB (10:15)
- ▶ MY LIPS WERE TOUCHED AND MY MOUTH WAS OPENED (10:16-17)
- ▶ BE STRONG (10:18-19)
- ▶ A RETURN TO FIGHT, AND A REVELATION OF TRUTH (10:20-21)

through which blessing and instruction are given, it is to be the object of crucifixion. In fact, *“they that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts”* (Gal 5:24). Our present bodies are *“vile”* (Phil 3:21), and produce a state of wretchedness in those who are living by faith (Rom 7:24).

THE FRAILITY OF THE BODY

Our physical constitution is an *“earthen vessel,”* and is not presently capable of participating in the benefits of the *“treasure”* that is housed within (2 Cor 4:7). It is the weakest part of our constitution, as confirmed by our text.

- ▣ First, as Daniel approached the Lord, he brought his flesh under subjection. As soon as Daniel, a holy and beloved man of God, came into contact with a heavenly messenger, his flesh was overcome. For three full weeks he neither ate nor drank anything pleasant, refusing to give his body refreshing ointments (10:3).
- ▣ When visited from heaven, no strength remained in him, his comeliness was turned to corruption, and he retained no strength. He fell upon his face to the ground, and a

deep sleep came upon his body (10:9).

It is one thing to read such an account, it is quite another to correlate it with ones theology. It should not surprise you that a considerable amount of professed religious value is founded upon bodily experience. It may relate to certain sensations attributed to the work of the Holy Spirit, being thrown down violently, unintelligible expressions, etc. Such views have compelled people to actually place more value upon what happened in their body than what is revealed to their spirits.

It is not my purpose to demean such experiences, anymore than it would be appropriate to speak reproachfully of Daniel’s experience. However, it is imperative that we note the blessing was not found in Daniel’s body lying face down upon the ground. The draining of his fleshly strength is not represented as the intention or end of the blessing. **In fact, Daniel had to recover from that circumstance before he could receive what God has sent to him.**

In our text, the frailty of the body will once again be emphasized. Daniel could not simply wait for the effects of the angelic appearance upon his body to fade away or wear off. Recovery required supernatural intervention. Only then did the revelation continue. **The revelation was the point, not its impact upon Daniel’s body.**

A POINT TO BE MADE

While it is grievous to make this point, both our spiritual and social culture demands that we do so. The body is not the locus, or center, of the life of faith. While it does belong to the Lord, and is for Him (1 Cor 6:13,15), it is not the hub

of life in Christ Jesus. This is the part of our persons that has been cursed, and cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That is so apparent that one would think nothing more was required to be said.

However, in the affluent Western world, the people of God are being subjected to all manner of teachings that accentuate life in the flesh, or *“in the body.”* Such things as healing, prosperity, and earthly success are not wrong of themselves. However, neither are they guaranteed in Christ Jesus.

- ▣ One of the greatest prophets of all time died of a disease – one in which he was **not** being chastened (2 Kings 13:14).
- ▣ A holy man who was personally escorted to Abraham’s bosom by holy angels was a *“beggar full of sores”* during his life upon the earth (Luke 16:20).
- ▣ The Apostle who *“labored more abundantly”* than the other Apostles experienced infirmity (Gal 4:13), need (Phil 4:12), and personally found that when he was weak, then He was strong (2 Cor 12:10).
- ▣ The man known as the only person Paul had, who naturally cared for the condition of God’s people, lived with *“often infirmities”* (1 Tim 5:23).
- ▣ In his travels, Paul once *“left Trophimus sick in Miletus”* (2 Tim 4:20).
- ▣ There was a whole body of saints in Jerusalem who were poor, and needed regular assistance from the churches (Rom 15:26).

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- ▣ The early church had widows who required “daily ministrations” (Acts 6:1).
- ▣ Some of the choicest saints were in bonds and suffered adversity (Heb 13:3).
- ▣ Some of the most favored saints of all time are described as experiencing “trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise” (Heb 11:36-39).
- ▣ Pure and undefiled religion before

God “is this, To visit the fatherless and widows **in their affliction**, and to keep himself unspotted from the world” (James 1:27).

- ▣ One of the telling descriptions of God’s people is found in Christ’s revelation of how He will judge the response of people to them. In that description He identifies them with Himself. “For I was an hungered, and ye gave Me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took Me not in: naked, and ye clothed Me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited Me not” (Mat 25:42-43).
- ▣ Epaphroditus nearly died from a sickness, while he was in prison with the Apostle Paul (Phil 2:25-27).

All of these matters pertained to the body, and were not by any means the indication of some form of spiritual inferiority. It is inexcusable for men to guarantee wellness

to the household of faith, or declare that healing is an integral part of the atonement, or that Jesus died to guarantee our prosperity. Illness is nowhere said to be a sin, or to alienate from God. Christ died for sin! No man of God ever taught such a thing: not Moses, the Prophets, John the Baptist, Jesus Himself, nor the Apostles. Men of God have desired that their brethren “prosper and be in health” as their soul prospered (3 John 1:2). But that is a far cry from a guarantee that such conditions belong to every child of God.

This is not some theological bypath. If we do not keep these realities in mind, texts like the one before us will not be viewed correctly or with everlasting profit. Daniel still heard the angel even though his body had succumbed in the wake of the vision. The blessing he received did not automatically transfer to his body, but rather became the undoing of the body. Further, the angel will enable Daniel to recover himself. However, it will not be easy, but attended with difficulty.

HE TOUCHED ME

“ 10:10 And, behold, an hand touched me, which set me upon my knees and upon the palms of my hands.”

This is the third time Daniel has been touched by one from heaven. The first two times are record in the eighth

and ninth chapters. “Now as he was speaking with me, I was in a deep sleep on my face toward the ground: but **he touched me**, and set me upright . . . Yea, whiles I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, **touched me** about the time of the evening oblation” (Dan 8:8; 9:21). He will experience a fourth touch later: “Then there **came again and touched me one like the appearance of a man, and he strengthened me**” (Dan 10:18).

If the **sight** of an angel from heaven causes men to faint, what will

sense a certain gentleness in heaven’s dealings with the prophet Daniel. The angel did not take him by a lock of his hair, as the heavenly messenger did to Ezekiel (Ezek 8:3).

Now, the angel whose appearance had stunned Daniel, graciously and gently touches him, bringing both strength and assurance.

WHICH SET ME UP

“ . . . which set me upon my knees and upon the palms of my hands.” Other versions read, “which made me tremble on my knees and on the palms of my hands,”^{NKJV} “and set me trembling on my hands and knees,”^{NASB} “setting my knees and my hands trembling,”^{NJB} “still trembling, to my hands and knees,”^{NLT} and “and shook me onto my hands and knees.”^{TNK}

The idea is that Daniel was already trembling, and that the heavenly touch raised him to his hands and knees

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result from the **touch** of such a personality.

AN HAND

“And, behold, an hand touched me . . .” Behold the gentility of heaven! An angel from heaven could easily crush the strongest of the sons of men. Yet, you

while he remained trembling. Remember, this was a holy prophet, greatly beloved of God. One can only imagine what the impact of this occasion would have had on someone who was unholy, disinterested, or caught up in the ways of the world.

Before the message is fully disclosed to Daniel, he will be brought to the peak of sensitivity – both in spirit and in body. All of his resources must be marshaled and focused upon this single occasion. There can be no distractions. The message is too critical.

A Small Picture
This is but a small picture of

the ultimate and appointed confrontation of all men with the Father of glory, the glorified Christ, and all of His holy angels. That encounter will be accompanied by the greatest solemnity. Never before will humanity have been in such a state of alertness and awareness. *“Every eye”* will see the glorified Savior, and those who are alienated from Him will *“wail because of Him”* (Rev 1:7). Among the unsaved there shall be such lamenting as was never known while they were upon the earth. The cry recorded in Jeremiah will rise before the assembled universe: *“The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved”* (Jer 8:20).

Regarding that day, it is imperative that men be *“touched”* prior to the return of our Lord. **That slone will prepare them.** Strength and awareness must be developed before the appearance of Christ, else one will not be able to stand in that day. The words of Malachi certainly apply in this matter: *“But who may abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when He appeareth? for He is like a refiner’s fire, and like fullers’ soap: and He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and He shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness”* (Mal 3:2-3).

UNDERSTAND AND STAND UP

“¹¹ And he said unto me, O Daniel, a man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak unto thee, and stand upright: for unto thee am I now sent. And when he had spoken this word unto me, I stood trembling.”

It is one thing to be granted a vision of a heavenly personality. It is quite another to have him speak with favor and consideration. Once again, we will see the benefit of being close to the Lord and being especially loved by Him. Since the psychologists and educators have gained prominence in the church, we do not hear much being said about such things. They are counterproductive to career development and institution building. Notwithstanding, the Holy spirit has said much about this aspect of the Divine nature, and we do well to give heed to it.

A MAN GREATLY BELOVED

“^{11a} And he said unto me, O Daniel, a man greatly beloved . . .” This is the second time Daniel has been addressed in this manner.

▣ **Revelation given because he was greatly beloved.** The first is recorded in the previous chapter: *“I am come to show thee; for thou art greatly beloved”* (9:23).

▣ **A prelude to understanding.**

Now, the belovedness of Daniel will be the occasion for understanding.

▣ **Peace and strength are ministered.** The third time is later in this same chapter: *“O man greatly beloved, fear not: peace be unto thee, be strong, yea, be strong”* (10:19).

written, *“Jesus beholding him loved him”* (Mk 10:21). His inquiry had drawn on the heartstrings of the Savior.

The church in Rome was addressed as *“beloved of God”* (Rom 1:7). The Thessalonian brethren were also saluted in this manner (2 Thess 2:13).

IT IS ONE THING TO BE GRANTED A VISION OF A HEAVENLY PERSONALITY. IT IS QUITE ANOTHER TO HAVE HIM SPEAK WITH FAVOR AND CONSIDERATION.

As I have said before, Daniel is the only man of whom it is said, he was *“greatly beloved.”* It is said of Solomon that he was *“beloved of his God”* (Neh 13:26), and that *“the Lord loved him”* (2 Sam 12:24). In his supplications, David twice refers to himself as *“Thy beloved”* (Psa 60:5; 108:6). Solomon does the same in Psalm 127:2. Under the direction of the Holy Spirit, John four times refers to himself as *“the disciple whom Jesus loved”* (John 13:23; 20:2; 21:7,20). It is said of Martha, Mary, and Lazarus, *“Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus”* (John 11:5). On one occasion, when asked by a wealthy young man what he must do to inherit eternal life, it is

The premier *“beloved”* One is the Lord Jesus Himself, whom God called *“My beloved Son”* (Matt 3:17; 17:5).

You will not, however, find many verbalizations of such Divine love. It is an expression reserved for those who are especially tender toward the Lord.

Because I have dealt previously with this matter, there is no need to develop it any further here. It is enough to observe that those who are in Christ Jesus are to aspire to be especially loved by the Lord. That is the reason for the following admonitions.

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- ▶ “Be ye therefore followers of God, as **dear children**”(Eph 5:1).
- ▶ “That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto **all pleasing**”(Col 1:10).
- ▶ “But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odor of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, **wellpleasing to God**”(Phil 4:18).
- ▶ “Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is **wellpleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ**”(Heb 13:21).

As confirmed in Daniel, **special**

that I speak unto thee . . . ” Other versions read, “**carefully consider the words I am about to speak to you,**”^{NIV} “**pay attention to the words that I am going to speak to you,**”^{NRSV} “**give heed to the words that I speak to you,**”^{RSV} “**take in the sense of the words I say to you,**”^{BBE} “**listen carefully to what I say to you,**”^{NLT} “**mark what I say to you,**”^{TNK} and “**attend to the words that I am speaking unto thee.**”^{YLT}

The objective of heavenly communication is not impression or sensation, but understanding. You can see from the various translations that different aspects of understanding are emphasized. Understanding involves the work of God and the response of men –

It should not take us unawares, therefore, that the heavenly messenger urges Daniel to understand, comprehend, or discern, the word that is being brought to him. In order to do that, two things must happen. First, understanding must flow from heaven to Daniel. Second, he must engage all of his powers to receive that understanding. He will have to concentrate, listen attentively, and ponder what he is told, allowing the words to saturate his heart and mind. **God does not administer understanding to inattentive and distracted souls.** Therefore, the angel calls Daniel into a state of sobriety and alertness.

A Word About the Times

It should be obvious that we are living in a religious culture that fails to encourage this posture of heart and mind. This is day when entertainment and sensual impressions have been unduly exalted. The accent has been placed upon the soulish nature of man, to the neglect of his spiritual constitution. The vast resources of the mind are thrust into the background in preference for instant impressions and exhilarating feelings. This trend is reflected in the music, entertainment, messages, and emphases of our times.

We should not be surprised that such trends have produced an arid spiritual desert. A lack of “*spiritual understanding*”(Col 1:9) is evident in the average church. Convenient religious creeds and slogans have been developed that relieve men of thoughtful deliberation, and focused consideration. Gifted and productive thinkers are rare, and in some circles they appear to be non-existent.

Let it be clear, the God of heaven does not work graciously in such environments. **If, under the Law, and in the lesser light of the Old Covenant, holy men were required to marshal all of their resources in at effort to understand, what of this “day of salvation?”** What of a circumstance where there is a superior Man, a transcendent message, a better covenant, and a powerful Gospel? What kind of attentiveness should characterize a time like this? What type of understanding ought to be found among those who wear the name of Jesus Christ?

AS CONFIRMED IN DANIEL, SPECIAL AND UNUSUAL BENEFITS ARE MINISTERED TO THOSE WHO HAVE EXTENDED THEMSELVES TO WALK PLEASING BEFORE THE LORD.

and unusual benefits are ministered to those who have extended themselves to walk pleasing before the Lord. If this observation is true, mediocrity is an offensive blight that robs the soul and stunts the spiritual growth of those in its grip. Casualness and disinterest pushed those dominated by them away from God, away from blessing, and away from Divine comfort and strength.

An Observation

If these words appear to be too strong, be assured that, if anything, they are too weak. **The staggering investment that God has made in our salvation will not allow for any other conclusions.** For the willing sacrifice of Christ, and His present beneficent rule and intercession in our behalf, to be met with erratic and meager responses is intolerable. Further, when such responses are produced by a religious system, we have before us an example of the reality and effects of “*strong delusion.*”

UNDERSTAND THE WORDS

“^{11b} . . . understand the words

both are required. If what is made known is to be comprehended, it must be **carefully considered.** It is imperative that the heart **pay attention** to what is being said. The will must move the individual to **give heed, listen carefully, and attend** to what is being declared. The **sense**, or implication, of the message is to be taken in, and the intellect must **mark**, or differentiate, the message, setting it apart from all of the wisdom and sounds of the world. If this is not done, understanding will not come.

God has always required understanding. Under the Law He said, “*Understand therefore*” (Deut 9:3,6). Jesus said, “*Hear and understand*”(Mark 15:10). Those who are converted are described as coming to “*understand*”(Rom 15:21). Paul wrote that men might “*understand*”(Eph 3:4; Phil 1:12). Paul prayed that those to whom he wrote would be given understanding from God (Eph 1:18-19; 2 Tim 2:7). A lack of understanding is always depicted as a most serious condition (Prov 28:5; Isa 6:9; 2 Pet 2:12; Jer 5:21; Mark 7:18; Rom 1:31).

How ought the preachers who claim identity with Him speak? And, how should the hearers hear?

The words of Paul, written to Timothy are still appropriate. The sense of them ought to attend every message, and dominate every heart that is subjected to this glorious Gospel. **“Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things”** (2 Tim 2:7). If God speaks – and He has spoken to us through His Son (Heb 1:1-2) – there is a solemn obligation placed upon all men to hear Him *“who speaks from heaven”*^{NKJV} (Heb 12:25). The speaking Jesus still cries out, *“Hear, and understand”* (Matt 15:10). Again it is written, *“Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live”* (Isa 55:3).

The quest for spiritual understanding within the professed church of our time is too meager. **It is reproachful to Christ, and dishonoring of God to not pursue understanding when the treasures of heaven have been opened to men.** God does not unveil the great mysteries kept secret from the foundation of the world for them to be despised and neglected. If Solomon urged his son to *“get understanding”* available in his time (Prov 4:5,7), what must be said of this day when God’s doctrine is dropping as rain, distilling as the dew, and falling as showers upon the grass (Deut 32:2)?

STAND UPRIGHT

“^{11c} . . . and stand upright . . .”

Other versions read, *“stand up,”*^{NIV} *“stand up on your feet.”*^{RSV} and *“get up on your feet.”*^{BBE}

Before the messenger delivers his word, Daniel is commanded to be in a state of alertness. Earlier, in the eighth chapter, Daniel was in a prone position, with his face toward the ground. Before Gabriel delivered his message, he touched the prophet, setting him *“upright”* (Dan 8:18). Now, another messenger summons Daniel into a state of optimum alertness.

This is a heavenly manner – to speak to men when they are alert. Before the Lord spoke to Ezekiel, He told him *“Stand upon thy feet”* (Ezek 2:1). When the Spirit entered into Ezekiel, He set the

prophet upon his feet (Ezek 3:24). When Jesus appeared to Saul of Tarsus, he was smitten to the ground. After identifying Himself, Jesus said, *“Rise, and stand upon thy feet”* (Acts 26:16).

It is not proper for us to attempt to impose procedures upon our brethren related to hearing the Word of God. However, it is proper to encourage one another to be in a state of alertness, subduing any inclination to be casual and undisciplined in the presence of the Lord.

UNTO THEE I AM NOW SENT

“^{11d} . . . for unto thee am I now sent.” Whether men wish to admit it or not, there have been discretionary messages sent from heaven to earth – messages that were eventually to be

of God to live in such a manner as to receive more than an average portion from God. Even in the wilderness, God sent manna that was to be gathered by everyone *“according to his eating”* – or as much as he could eat (Ex 16:21). This is still the manner of the kingdom. **What an individual receives from God is largely determined by their appetite for the things of God.** This is why Paul wrote to the Corinthians, *“You are not restricted by us, but you are restricted by your own affections”*^{NKJV} (2 Cor 6:12).

Daniel had cultured an appetite for the things of God, and a keen interest in the Temple, city, and people of God. He had also proved to be a good custodian of the truth, responding to it in a manner that brought glory to God. Therefore, the

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communicated to all of the people of God, yet which came initially to selected individuals. The message being delivered is that kind of word.

This is seen throughout the Word of God. Special messages were received by Noah (Gen 7:1), Abraham (Gen 15:1), Jacob (Gen 35:10), Moses (Ex 3:14), and the Apostles and Prophets (Eph 3:5). Holy angels have been sent to specific individuals, carrying specific messages. Scripture records such messages being brought to Hagar (Gen 16:9), Abraham (Gen 22:11), Gideon (Judges 6:12), Elijah (1 Kgs 19:5-7), Zechariah (Zech 1:9), Zecharias (Lk 1:19), Mary (Lk 1:26), Peter (Acts 12:7-8), John (Rev 1:1), and others.

There are people who are especially favored of God. Their record is intended to encourage the people

Lord is sending understanding to Daniel that ordinary men were not given.

It might be well to say here that many people remain in a state of perpetual spiritual ignorance simply because they have no appetite for the truth of God. **If you have personally been seeing more of the things of God, it is largely owing to your desire to know them.**

I STOOD TREMBLING

“^{11e} And when he had spoken this word unto me, I stood trembling.” Other versions read, *“I stood up trembling.”*

When Daniel stood to his feet, he was shaking and not yet recovered from falling to the ground. Yet, at the touch and word of the angel he marshaled all of his strength and stood up. He was

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strengthened by degrees – first he fell face down on the ground. Then he was raised to his hands and knees. Now he stands upright and in a state of trembling.

There is a form of personal discipline revealed in this text. Daniel was both weak and fearful, yet he rose to his feet, even though tottering and physically unstable. His weakness will not be perpetual, nor will yours if you will but linger in the presence of the Lord in a state of alertness and readiness.

The impact of man’s exposure to heavenly influences confirms his fallen state. Prior to the fall, there is no

evidence that Adam was in any way moved to fear and trembling by the presence of the Lord. However, once sin entered into the world, trembling did as well.

This is the trembling of the flesh, which is disconcerted in the presence of heavenly influences. When the angel of the Lord appeared to Moses in the burning bush, “*Moses trembled*” (Acts 7:32). At Mount Sinai, “*all the people that was in the camp trembled*” (Ex 19:16). When Habakkuk heard from the Lord, he “*trembled*” within and without (Hab 3:16). When the holy women went to the sepulcher where Jesus had been laid, they

received a message from an angel and “*trembled and were amazed*” (Mk 16:8).

I understand that this experience can be stated in such a manner as to promote fear. However, we must carefully avoid leaving men afraid to hear from God, receive understanding from Him, or dwell in His presence. It is the flesh that is weak, not the spirit (Matt 26:41)! It is the outward man that is perishing, not the inward man (2 Cor 4:16)! **Those who believe on the Lord will not be confounded**, even though their flesh may be caused to tremble (1 Pet 2:6). That is the promise of God! It is most helpful to know these things.

FROM THE FIRST DAY

“¹² Then said he unto me, Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words.”

We now embark on a most

not, Daniel . . . ”

Once again I want to call attention to the manner in which heaven addresses the prophet. Although he was called “*Beltshazzar*” upon earth (1:7; 2:26; 4:8,9,18,19; 5:12; 10:1), he is never so addressed by heaven! The first time a

unique message.

“Fear Not”

Notice the perception of the angel. Daniel is trembling, and the heavenly messenger immediately seeks to put him at ease. He has brought a blessing, not a curse, and Daniel will be the better for what he is about to receive, not the worse. This was necessary because “*fear hath torment*” (1 John 4:13), distracting both heart and soul. **If ever much is to be heard and realized from the Lord, fear must give way to confidence and peace.** Thus the Lord Jesus, following His resurrection, often announced Himself by saying, “*Peace be unto you*” (Lk 24:36; John 20:19,21,28).

The fact that heaven jars upon the flesh is seen in these familiar words. Nearly every favorable heavenly manifestation is attended by the words “*Fear not!*” **These words were not spoken to Adam and Eve, Cain, Pharaoh, and the likes.** They were always a prelude to a blessing, a benefit, something good that was about to be experienced.

The first person of Scriptural record to hear these words was Abraham (Gen 15:1). Others include Hagar (Gen 21:17), Isaac (Gen 26:24), Jacob (Gen 46:3), Joshua (Josh 8:3), Gideon (Judges 6:23), Joseph (Matt 1:20), the women

IT WILL BECOME APPARENT WHY THIS WORLD IS NOT TO BE OUR PRIMARY FRAME OF REFERENCE. THIS WORLD IS A SUBORDINATE ONE, BEING SUBJECT TO HIGHER AND MORE POWERFUL INFLUENCES – BOTH GOOD AND EVIL.

intriguing text of Scripture. We will be given a rare glimpse behind the scenes – a glance at some of the involvements of answered prayer. It will become apparent why this world is not to be our primary frame of reference. **This world is a subordinate one**, being subject to higher and more powerful influences – both good and evil.

FEAR NOT, DANIEL

“^{12a} Then said he unto me, Fear

heavenly personality addressed Daniel is recorded in the previous chapter. Gabriel said, “*O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding*” (9:22). The second time is in our text: “*O Daniel, a man greatly beloved*” (10:11). The messages, therefore, were not brought to him because of his world prominence or achievement, which were encapsulated in the name “*Beltshazzar*.” It was Daniel’s faith and identity with the seed of Abraham that qualified him for this most

who went to Jesus' tomb (Matt 28:5), Zecharias (Lk 1:13), Mary (Lk 1:30), the shepherds who heard of Jesus' birth (Lk 2:10), Simon Peter (Lk 5:10), Jairus (Lk 8:50), the Apostles (Lk 12:32), Paul (Acts 27:24), and John (Rev 1:17).

FROM THE FIRST DAY

^{12b} . . . for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand." Other versions read, "set your heart to understand,"^{NKJV} "set your mind to gain understanding,"^{NIV} "gave your heart to getting wisdom,"^{BBE} and "began to pray for understanding."^{NLT}

Here we see how Daniel's prayer had an instant affect in heaven, even though it appeared to be vain on the earth. The "first day" took place in the third year of Cyrus king of Persia, during the first few days of the first month (10:1,4). It was then that Daniel mourned before the Lord for three full weeks (10:2). We know this is the period to which the angel refers, because that three week period is described as the time that the angel was detained (v 13).

It is generally agreed that the third year of Cyrus' reign was approximately the 73rd year of Daniel's captivity. **If he was about thirteen when taken into captivity, that would make him eighty-six years of age at this time.** That would be the youngest possible estimate. Yet, even in the proximity of ninety years of age, Daniel was alert, sensitive, and in possession of a great faith. At that mature age, Daniel "set his heart to understand."

Setting the Heart to Understand

Such a determination to gain understanding is rare at any age. **Ponder how unique it was for an old man who was a government official in a land to which he had been carried captive seventy-three years before.**

Note, the angel identifies why Daniel was praying – "to understand." In his own record, Daniel said he was "mourning three full weeks"(10:2). Yet, he was not simply lamenting, but was seeking for understanding concerning the determined purposes of God.

From this, we see that the appropriation of true understanding

involves the mortification of the flesh. It is by no means easy to learn the things of God while pampering the flesh. This is particularly true when spiritual impoverished times are being experienced, and the religious masses are dwelling at a distance from the Lord. **The blanket of mediocrity and indifference smothers the learning process – particularly when it relates the purpose of God.**

To "set" the heart, is to assign an objective to the heart. It is to unclutter the heart of distracting things, and

does not encourage determined hearts. But if a person is going to be taught by God, both of those qualities must be found in some measure.

TO CHASTEN THYSELF

^{12c} . . . and to chasten thyself before thy God. . . . Other versions read, "humble yourself,"^{NKJV} "making yourself poor in spirit,"^{BBE} "afflict thyself,"^{DOUAY} and "resolved to mortify yourself."^{NJB}

Again, note how the angel is interpreting the last three weeks of Daniel's activity. Daniel said he "mourned

THAT CIRCUMSTANCE DEMANDS A DETERMINED MIND AND A FOCUSED HEART. WHEN IT COMES TO THE THINGS OF GOD, WANDERING MINDS ARE EMPTY ONES! GOD SIMPLY WILL NOT VOUCHSAFE SACRED TRUTH TO A DOUBLE MINDED MAN

determine to be occupied with higher matters. This is an imperative posture. A heavenly messenger said to Ezekiel, "set thine heart upon all that I shall show thee; for to the intent that I might show them unto thee art thou brought hither" (Ezek 40:4).

The things of God are high above the things of this world. As it is written, "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts" (Isa 55:9). That circumstance demands a determined mind and a focused heart. **When it comes to the things of God, wandering minds are empty ones!** God simply will not vouchsafe sacred truth to a double minded man (James 1:6-8).

While this is not something that can be systematized or put into a convenient routine of study, **it does provide an explanation for why some people do not appropriate much understanding of the things of God.** This is another reason why the current craze of religious entertainment is to be avoided. It allows for a divided mind, and

three full weeks." The angel says he has set his heart "to understanding," and had "chastened" himself. On earth, Daniel had been mourning for three weeks. In heaven, it was seen as setting his heart to understand, and chastening, or humbling, himself for three full weeks. David spoke of a time when he "wept" and "chastened" his soul with fasting (Psa 69:10).

Recently, there has been much talk in the Christian community about Second Chronicles 7:14. "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land" (2 Chron 7:14). This is a most noble consideration, and a call to enter into the spirit of this promise is in every way right. When we consider the humbling of ourselves in view of the text before us, we will obtain a correct picture of what is involved in such activity. This is not something that is casually achieved, but requires the setting of the heart and the chastening of the body. The flesh must be subordinated!

More was involved in Daniel's prayer being answered than could be detected by natural means, by Given O. Blakely

THY WORDS WERE HEARD

^{12d} . . . thy words were heard . . .”

Herein is a marvelous thing: Daniel’s words were heard in heaven! Mark you, Daniel did not say he used words. He said he “*mourned for three full weeks.*” His mourning, however, was expressed in words, not merely wordless emotions. He

Words from a man brought a messenger from heaven!

Some imagine that Divine activity is always arbitrary, having nothing to do with the activities of holy men. But this text confirms this is not true. The words of Daniel were the reason why this messenger was sent – from the very first

make prayer to me for this, that I may do it for them.”^{BBE}

The Divine economy provides for the effective supplications and intercessions of men. There are matters related to the purpose of God that are not intended to remain secret. There are Divine secrets that the Lord wants to tell. As it is written, “*The secret of the LORD is with them that fear Him.*” And again, “*but His secret is with the righteous.*” And again, “*Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but He revealeth his secret unto His servants the prophets*” (Psa 25:14; Prov 3:32; Amos 3:7).

The picture you receive is one of heaven waiting for someone to ask for understanding in this matter. God is, in a sense, **waiting** “*that He may be gracious*” (Isa 30:18). **There are realities to be made known that only require a seeking soul, and hungry and thirsty spirit, and a person who is willing to subdue all competing inclinations in order that he might understand things God desires to make known.**

It seems to me that many spiritual quests are too shallow – too much on the surface of life. They often lack both focus and energy. This is largely owing to the type of religion that is dominant in our time. It is not challenging enough to elicit zeal from the hearts of men. How often do you hear of a person who sets their heart to understand something God has revealed? This is precisely what Daniel has done, depriving himself of lawful pleasantries for three full weeks. He has readied himself to hear from God.

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had done exactly what the Lord had admonished through Hosea. “**Take with you words, and turn to the LORD: say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously: so will we render the calves of our lips**” (Hosea 14:2).

I AM COME FOR THY WORDS

^{12e} . . . and I am come for thy words.” Other versions read, “*I have come because of your words,*”^{NKJV} “*I have come in response to your words,*”^{NASB} “*I am come for thy words’ sake,*”^{ASV} “*and your words are the reason why I have come,*”^{NJB} and “*I have come in answer to your prayer,*”^{NLT}

This is not an assessment made by a man, but the perception of an angel.

day that Daniel had set his heart to understand, and had chastened himself.

The words of the angel confirm that Daniel was a righteous man who prayed fervently, for “*The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much*” (James 5:16). He sought for understanding that God intended to give. This is the heavenly manner. As it is written, “*I the LORD have spoken it, and I will do it. Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them*” (Ezek 36:36-37). Other versions read, “*I will let the house of Israel ask Me to do for them,*”^{NASB} “*I will yield to the plea of the house of Israel to do this for them,*”^{NIV} and “*The children of Israel will again*

THE PRINCE OF PERSIA

¹³ **But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia.**”

While Daniel was praying, great struggles and conflicts were taking place in “*high places.*” There is no way Daniel could know of the details of this conflict

on his own. There are no human capacities capable of probing and analyzing the realm of which the angel now speaks.

From the experiential point of view, the heavens had been silent for “*three full weeks.*” It appeared as though an answer was being purposefully delayed. Yet, this was not the case at all. We will see that more is involved in

getting strategic answers to the sons of men than at first appears.

THE PRINCE OF THE KINGDOM OF PERSIA

^{13a} **But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days.** Other versions read, “*withstanding me for twenty-one days,*”^{NASB} “*resisted me for twenty-one days,*”^{NIV} “*opposed me for twenty-one days,*”^{NRSV} “*put himself*

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against me for twenty-one days,"^{BBE} and "for twenty-one days the spirit-prince of Persia blocked my way."^{NLT}

First, it ought to be noted how gracious the Lord is to provide an explanation for a delay in the answer to Daniel's prayer. God certainly is not under obligation to give account of His matters, and does not often do so (Job 33:13). Yet, because Daniel is "greatly beloved," additional understanding will be ministered to him. Not only will the answer to his prayer be granted, he will also learn something of what was involved in the answer being brought to him.

The Prince of Persia

Some are of the opinion that "the

an earthly one, nor was it fought in an earthly arena. Therefore, the prince of reference cannot be Cyrus, his son Cambyses, or any other worldly dignitary. It simply is not possible for earthly dignitaries to hinder heavenly powers for twenty-one days.

This was a spiritual principality and power, the likes of which presently engage the saints of God (Eph 6:12). The very thought that any personality could withstand a holy angel for twenty days is staggering. **It confirms the magnitude of the warfare into which we have been called.**

Some Clarification from Daniel

Isaiah was given a hint of the

high realms and those upon the earth. There was a "prince of Persia" who stood against the angels of God. Satan is also called "the prince of the **POWER OF THE AIR**," or "the ruler of the kingdom of the air"^{NIV} (Eph 2:2). Other versions read "powers of the air,"^{ASV} "authority of the air,"^{DARBY} and YLT. The word "power" means decision-making authority. Thus we are told that Satan heads up an entire hierarchy of evil, where decisions are made and influence is wrought in the earth. This is one of the means by which he "works in the children of disobedience" (Eph 2:2b).

There is also Michael "the great prince" who stands for the Israelites (Dan 12:1). Zechariah was also introduced to "four spirits of the heavens" who wrought works upon the earth (Zech 6:5-7).

Wicked Principalities and Powers

Just as surely as there are angelic influences that shape the experiences and successes of the children of God (Ex 23:23; 32:34; Dan 3:28; Acts 8:26; 12:11), so **there are wicked principalities and powers who stand behind the propagation of darkness and iniquity.** Thus we read of "the rulers of the darkness of this world" (Eph 6:12). These are not men, for men do not "rule" darkness. Rather, they are overcome by it. Some of these evil powers promote doctrines within the professed church, i.e. "doctrines of demons" (1 Tim 4:1). Others promote sinful expressions, and are thus called "spiritual wickedness in high places" (Eph 6:12). But their influence is not limited to this world. Daniel is now hearing of one of these dark powers who fought against him somewhere between heaven and earth.

The extent to which these powers influence the sons of men is not fully revealed. Admittedly, there is an element of mystery about them. However, the text before us provides explanations that are not made known elsewhere. We can see that more is involved in the activities of earth than the intentions and deeds of men. Things that happen here sometimes draw the attention of Satanic powers, and provoke lofty battles in the higher realms.

Get the Picture

Let us not fail to get the picture that is being presented. Daniel had been

THIS WAS A SPIRITUAL PRINCIPALITY AND POWER, THE LIKES OF WHICH PRESENTLY ENGAGE THE SAINTS OF GOD (EPH 6:12). THE VERY THOUGHT THAT ANY PERSONALITY COULD WITHSTAND A HOLY ANGEL FOR TWENTY DAYS IS STAGGERING. IT CONFIRMS THE MAGNITUDE OF THE WARFARE INTO WHICH WE HAVE BEEN CALLED.

"prince of Persia" was Cyrus. However, the very notion that any earthly potentate could withstand or hinder a holy angel of any rank for twenty-one days seems to me to be an exercise of unusual folly. We have no record in Scripture of any mortal being able to successfully detain any angels, who cannot die (Lk 20:36). Angels are said to "excel in strength" (Psa 103:20), but such is not true if any king can hinder them. Peter also said the angels are "greater in power and might" (2 Pet 2:11).

Although it is not categorically said that the messenger of this chapter was an angel, it is said that he was sent to Daniel because his prayer was heard (10:12). Further he will affirm the battle of which he speaks is in some other place, where Michael, one of the chief angels, came to help him, and where he would return. This conflict, therefore, was not

correlation between the kings of the earth and higher principalities and powers. While his words do not provide a complete array of answers for the curious, they do open for us the vastness of the realm of personalities. Here are his words. "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the **LORD shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth**" (Isa 24:21). Other versions read, "the host of heaven, on high, and the kings of the earth, on earth,"^{NASB} and "the powers in the heavens above and the kings on the earth below,"^{NIV}

Were it not for our text, it might be easy to explain Isaiah's words by saying the heavenly host is a metaphorical way of speaking about the kings of the earth – and, indeed, some have chosen to do this. **However, Daniel is shown a clear correlation between powers in**

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praying for three full weeks. From the very first of his supplication, a holy angel was dispatched to bring understanding to Daniel. That angel was detained for twenty-one days by one referred to as “the prince of Persia.” Remember, this is the taking place in the third year of Cyrus, who was “*the king of Persia*” (2 Chron 36:22; Dan 10:1). This power, then was associated with the Persian rule. **He obviously saw the message being brought to Daniel as a threat to his domain, and thus engaged in an initiative against it.**

We must keep in mind that Daniel was making supplication to the Lord for His Temple, His city, and His people. This “*prince of Persia*,” therefore, was aligned against these things pertaining to God, and thus sought to hinder the heavenly messenger that was sent because of Daniel’s words.

How Much Is Known By These Powers?

How much did the “*prince of Persia*” know about what was being brought to Daniel? God does not reveal the extent of Satan’s knowledge, nor that of the spirits over which he rules. However, enough is said about him for us to know he is not to be treated as though he was ignorant, and the powers over which he presides unversed. Their view of the world and those who dwell in it is not be considered inconsequential. If we are, for example, “*ignorant of his devices*,” he can “*get an advantage of us*” (2 Cor 2:11).

The “*prince of Persia*” knew that something was being brought to earth. He apparently knew the one to whom it was being sent, and the messenger that was bringing it. He was aware that the whole matter impinged upon his territory, and therefore fought vigorously against it.

There is no room for naivety and simplicity in the child of God. The powers against which we are aligned require us to be “*sober and vigilant*” (1 Pet 5:8). Their presence demands that we “put on the whole armor of God” – Divinely appointed protection for our heart, soul, mind, and strength. The reason for this protection is clearly stated: “**that you may be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers,**

against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places” (Eph 6:11-12). “*Schemes*” imply intelligence, strategy, knowledge, and awareness.

Those in Christ Jesus must be told that a lack of interest and diligence will guarantee Satan’s success. Jesus has not promised Divine protection to the slothful and lukewarm. The record before us should confirm this to our hearts.

MICHAEL, ONE OF THE CHIEF PRINCES

“^{13b} . . . but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me . . . ”

MICHAEL, THEN, WAS ONE OF THE FOREMOST OR PRIMARY LEADERS OR CAPTAINS, NOT MERELY A FOREMOST ANGEL. AMONG THOSE OF HIGH RANK, MICHAEL WAS A CHIEF.

It should not surprise us that there is some form of hierarchy among the angels. The devil’s hosts have “*princes*,” and so do the holy angels. A “*chief*” is defined as “first, primary, or foremost.” ^{STRONGS} The word “prince” means ruler, leader, chieftain, and captain. ^{STRONGS} **Michael, then, was one of the foremost or primary leaders or captains, not merely a foremost angel. Among those of high rank, Michael was a chief.**

Elsewhere, we learn that Michael is “*the archangel*” (Jude 1:9), or “chief angel.” There are only two references to “*archangel*” in all of Scripture. Both of them say “*THE archangel*.” “*The Lord Himself shall descend with the voice of THE ARCHANGEL*” (1 Thess 4:16), and “*Yet Michael THE ARCHANGEL, when contending with the devil, he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee*” (Jude 1:9). Judging from these verses, it is quite possible that Michael is the only

archangel – the chief of all of the angels.

If this is true, it accentuates even more the significance of the message being brought to Daniel. **The** leading angel (at the most), or **a** leading angel (at the least) came to help the angel who was to deliver the message to Daniel. I can only surmise how fierce the battle must have been.

The Jews Encountered Trouble

On earth, the building of the Temple would be halted. Rehum the chancellor and Shimshai the scribe had written a letter “*against Jerusalem to Artaxerxes the king*.” They were joined in the diabolical scheme by “*the rest of their*

companions; the Dinaites, the Apharsathchites, the Tarpelites, the Apharsites, the Archevites, the Babylonians, the Susanchites, the Dehavites, and the Elamites, and the rest of the nations whom the great and noble Asnapper brought over, and set in the cities of Samaria, and the rest that are on this side the river, and at such a time” (Ezra 4:9-10). They charged the Jews were “*building the rebellious and the bad city*,” setting up the “*walls again*.” Their letter continued, “*then will they not pay toll, tribute, and custom, and so thou shalt endamage the revenue of the kings*” (Ezra 4:13). They urged the king to search the books, to confirm Jerusalem was “*hurtful unto kings and provinces*,” and that they had “*moved sedition with*” the city “*of old time, for which cause the city was destroyed*.”

Artaxerxes received the letter, believed what it said, and delivered this order to Rehum and Shimshai. “**Give ye now commandment to cause these men to cease, and that this city be**

not builded, until another commandment shall be given from me. Take heed now that ye fail not to do this: why should damage grow to the hurt of the kings?" (Ezra 4:21-22). The tragic result is record by Ezra. "Now when the copy of king Artaxerxes' letter was read before Rehum, and Shimshai the scribe, and their companions, they went up in haste to Jerusalem unto the Jews, and made **them to cease by force and power. Then ceased the work of the house of God which is at Jerusalem. So it ceased unto the second year of the reign of Darius king of Persia**" (Ezra

king of Persia,"^{NIV} "and I left him there with the prince of the kingdom of Persia,"^{NRSV} "when I came he was still there with the angel of the kings of Persia,"^{BBE} "and I remained there by the king of the Persians,"^{DOUAY} "and I have remained there near the kings of Persia."^{YLT}

Here the various versions throw a mantle of confusion over the text. There are at least for different views shown.

- ☐ Prior to the coming of Gabriel, the angel had been left alone with the kings (plural) of Persia – the kings on

was at this very time that the Samaritans interfered with the Temple builders. It is written, they "And hired counselors against them, to frustrate their purpose, all the days of Cyrus king of Persia, even until the reign of Darius king of Persia" (Ezra 4:5).

The "kings of Persia" refer to **Cyrus** (Daniel and Zerubbabel's time – Dan 6:28; Ezra 4:3), **Artaxerxes** (Ezra and Nehemiah's time) **Ahasuerus** (Esther's time – Esth 1:2-3), and **Darius** (king of Persia, not the Mede – Ezra 4:5,24). The point is that this angel stood by these kings, causing them to have more favor toward the Jews than the hatred evinced by "the prince of Persia." This is precisely why "Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes" issued commands to "build" and "finish" the house of God (Ezra 6:14). Further, the eleventh chapter will begin with this very angel declaring he had stood to "confirm and strengthen Darius the Mede" (Dan 11:1).

This angel fought vigorously for the people of God, while Daniel prayed, and after he delivered this message to the prophet. **This is why the Temple was built, the people spared in Esther's day, and the efforts of the Samaritans and others to stop the building of the Temple and the wall thwarted!** We should not fail to note that Daniel entered into this matter also. He had prayed earnestly for the Temple, Jerusalem, and the children of God. He was to this battling angel like Aaron and Hur were to Moses when Joshua fought against the Amalekites (Ex 17:10-13). This is a remarkable confirmation of God calling holy men and women into His purpose. It is something that has been accelerated in Christ Jesus.

SPIRITUAL POWERS AND GOVERNMENTS

The governments of this world do not stand on their own. There are spiritual powers behind them, just as surely as there was behind Persia, and is behind Israel, whose prince is Michael (Dan 12:1). When there is a shift of political power, some spiritual prince has been cast down. This is involved in the removal of kings by God (Dan 2:21).

Also, when ill-will is shown toward the people of faith, the influence of the

THIS ANGEL FOUGHT VIGOROUSLY FOR THE PEOPLE OF GOD, WHILE DANIEL PRAYED, AND AFTER HE DELIVERED THIS MESSAGE TO THE PROPHET. THIS IS WHY THE TEMPLE WAS BUILT, THE PEOPLE SPARED IN ESTHER'S DAY, AND THE EFFORTS OF THE SAMARITANS AND OTHERS TO STOP THE BUILDING OF THE TEMPLE AND THE WALL THWARTED!

4:24). The work was suspended for seven years (528-521 B.C.). This was approximately ten years after the account of this chapter, and revealed the fierceness and duration of the battle with "the prince of Persia."

All of this occurred approximately ten years after Daniel's vision, and was doubtless the direct result of the influence of "the prince of Persia." The Persians remained in power until The kingdom of Greece arose. But prior to this shift of power, "the prince of Persia" sought to do evil to the Jews. We know this is the case, because the explanation given to Daniel regarded the welfare of the people of God. This great battle not only was an effort to thwart the heavenly message from being brought to Daniel, but to clear the way to do evil to the people of God as well.

I REMAINED THERE

"^{13c} . . . and I remained there with the kings of Persia." Other versions read, "I had been left alone with the kings of Persia,"^{NKJV} "I was detained there with the

earth.

- ☐ Prior to the coming of Gabriel, the angel had been grappling with the "prince" of Persia by himself.
- ☐ When the angel left the battle to come to Daniel, Michael was still fighting against "the prince of Persia."
- ☐ All along, the angel had remained with the "kings of Persia" – the earthly rulers.

There is a sense in which every view contains some truth. The point of the text seems to be that this angel fought against initiatives against the Jews by the Persians – namely the kings recorded in Ezra 4). At the beginning of the Persian rule, Cyrus marshaled the people, and underwrote the rebuilding of the Temple as God had commissioned him (Ezra 1:1-4). That was two or three years before the word now being delivered to Daniel (this is now the third year of Cyrus – 10:1). **It**

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powers of darkness is at work. Additionally, when favor is shown toward them, the holy angels have stood up for the people, protecting them from the evil intentions of Satan's hosts. If things appear to be less than favorable, rest assured, they would have been much worse if the hosts of darkness were able to fulfill their will without restraint.

The Saints Have A Role

There is a role the saints play in all of this. They are wrestling *"against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high*

places" (Eph 6:12). Their fervent and effectual prayers play a powerful role in the shaping of the events of this world.

This is depicted in the Revelation given to John when he was exiled on Patmos. When the Lamb of God had taken the book of destiny from the hand of God Himself, twenty four lofty personalities fell before Him, *"having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odors, which are the prayers of saints"* (Rev 5:8). Immediately after that, all manner of activity broke out upon the earth. Again, prior to the pouring forth of judgments upon the earth, an angel is

seen who is to offer much incense *"with the prayers of all saints."* The smoke of the incense and prayers, it is written, *"ascended up before God out of the angel's hand"* (Rev 8:3-4). This is a vision showing the involvement of the saints in the government of this world. It is not immediate, but is indirect just like that of Daniel.

This is a very neglected privilege in the contemporary church. **I am persuaded this condition is the fruit of not knowing the nature of the warfare that is being waged in high places.**

TO MAKE THEE UNDERSTAND

"¹⁴ Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days: for yet the vision is for many days."

We will now see the extent of angelic knowledge – knowledge that has been given to them by the Lord, and it no doubt involves their awareness of what is being done by the Lord. Notice that those who come from God always speak with the greatest degree of assurance. They are never of doubtful mind, and speak with confidence. In my understanding, this is one of the marvelous results of dwelling in the courts of the Lord. If it is true that *"in Thy light shall we see light"* (Psa 36:9), then what wondrous things those celestial spirits must be given to see.

TO MAKE THEE UNDERSTAND

"^{14a} Now I am come to make thee understand. . ." Other versions read, *"give you an understanding,"* NASB *"explain to you,"* NIV *"help you understand,"* NRSV *"to teach thee,"* DOUAY *"to inform thee,"* Septuagint and *"to cause thee to understand."* YLT

What the heavenly messenger will now tell Daniel could not otherwise be known. This is not something he could calculate, like he did concerning the end of the captivity from the writings of Jeremiah. **It is not something he could reason out, having received numerous insights over the last seventy-three years concerning the**

very kingdoms of which the angel will speak. There are matters men must be **made to understand!**

things" (2 Tim 2:7). He prayed for the people of God to be given understanding (Eph 1:18; Col 1:9). Jesus Christ is said to

IT COULD NOT BE DERIVED FROM CONTEXTUAL CONSIDERATIONS, OR BY COMPARING PARALLEL REVELATIONS. THIS WAS SOMETHING THAT HAD TO BE BROUGHT DOWN FROM HEAVEN TO HIM. IT COULD NOT BE WORKED UP FROM THE EARTH, DISCOVERED BY ASTUTE REASONING OR A DISCIPLINED FRAME OF MIND.

The messenger has come to administer understanding – and he has come **because** of Daniel's *"words"* (verse 12). Do not marvel at this, for it is a pattern seen everywhere in God's word. The Psalmist prayed, *"Make me to understand the way of Thy precepts"* (Psa 119:27). Isaiah described the kind of whom God will make to understand. *"Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts"* (Isa 28:9). In extremely primitive spiritual times Job cried out, *"Teach me, and I will hold my tongue: and cause me to understand wherein I have erred"* (Job 6:24). After writing to Timothy a remarkable expositions of the salvation of God, Paul said, *"Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all*

have come and *"given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true"* (1 John 5:20).

Remember, this is not the first revelation given to Daniel. He has heard before concerning the very kingdoms of which the angel will now speak. He has heard about the Jews, Persia, and Greece – and now he will be caused to understand more. He was not able to dig the meaning out of the Hebrew. It could not be derived from contextual considerations, or by comparing parallel revelations. This was something that had to be brought down from heaven to him. **It could not be worked up from the earth, discovered by astute reasoning or a disciplined frame of mind.**

It is important that the people of

God come to a point where they associate truth with God, and the understanding of it with a gift from Him.

WHAT SHALL BEFALL THY PEOPLE

^{14b} . . . *what shall befall thy people in the latter days . . .*” Other versions read, *“what will happen to your people in the latter days,”*^{NKJV} *“what will happen to your people in the future,”*^{NIV} *“at the end of days,”*^{NRSV} *“in the final days,”*^{NJB} and *“in the latter end of the days.”*^{YLT}

Daniel had besought the Lord concerning His people: *“O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God: for thy city and thy people are called by*

Samuel (1 Sam 12:23), David (2 Sam 24:17), Solomon (1 Kgs 8:29), Isaiah (Isaiah 49:16), Jeremiah (Jer 14:7-22), Ezra (Ezra 9:5-15), Nehemiah (Neh 1:4-9), Amos (Amos 7:2), and Paul (Rom 10:1).

And now the Lord, who has engraved these people upon His hands (Isa 49:16), who had held out His gracious hands to them all the day, in spite of their consistent sin (Rom 10:21), sends a messenger to tell Daniel what will befall this people in the later days.

THE VISION IS FOR MANY DAYS

^{14b} . . . *for yet the vision is for many days.”* Other versions read, *“the vision refers to many days yet to come,”*

(Rom 10:10). Those who see no value in things that will happen in the future do not have good hearts. Nor, indeed, is their faith what it ought to be, if they have faith at all. **In the kingdom of God, relevancy is determined by the will of God, not the experience of men – and God does have a will for the people of Israel.**

Although Daniel no doubt prayed for a more immediate answer, yet the messenger informs him much more is yet to take place. His words carry the same import as those of the Lord Jesus, when He spoke of the destruction of Jerusalem, the end of the world, and His own return. After enumerating a number of disruptive events, He said, *“for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet”* (Matt 24:6).

There is an *“eternal purpose”* that is driving the affairs of this world (Eph 3:11). It is detailed, and, as will be confirmed, it is cast in stone. The people of Israel are involved in this purpose, and that is why this information is being brought to Daniel. This word will also confirm the deep love of the Lord for this people, as Michael their prince will stand up in their behalf (12:1).

AN APPLICATION

Passages such as this should destroy any notion that God is heartless and inconsiderate of His people. Though this charge is often hurled at the Lord, it is altogether false. This very text was used to encourage the people of God for nearly five hundred years after Daniel had left the world’s stage. It proved to be a sweet elixir when no other prophets were raised up – a period of Divine silence, which all godly people dread.

Once again, the words of Amos are fulfilled: *“Surely the Sovereign LORD does nothing without revealing His plan to His servants the prophets”*^{NIV} (Amos 3:7).

HERE WE SEE SOMETHING OF BOTH GOD AND DANIEL. GOD IS DESIROUS TO SHARE HIS SECRET WITH SOMEONE, AND DANIEL IS DESIROUS TO KNOW IT. EVEN THOUGH THESE THINGS WILL NOT OCCUR IN DANIEL’S TIME, YET THE LORD WANTS TO GIVE HIM AN UNDERSTANDING OF THEM.

thy name” (Dan 9:19). He had received an initial response to his petition from the mighty angel Gabriel himself, who was caused to fly swiftly to him (9:21). Now, more is given to the aging prophet.

Daniel has the people in his heart, just as Paul who said centuries later, *“That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh”* (Rom 9:2-3). **In measure, the degree of fellowship a person has with the Living God can be seen in his attitude toward the Jews.** No person who has come into the presence of the Lord has failed to plead for these people. This includes such spiritual notables as Moses (Psa 106:23),

^{NKJV} *“for the vision pertains to the days yet future,”*^{NASB} and *“the vision concerns the time yet to come.”*^{NRSV}

Here we see something of both God and Daniel. God is desirous to share His secret with someone, and Daniel is desirous to know it. Even though these things will not occur in Daniel’s time, yet the Lord wants to give him an understanding of them. As for Daniel, he has a keen interest in his own people, and therefore will be a good custodian of the understanding that will be ministered to him.

The heart is more versatile than the mind. It can leap forward, deriving great benefit from things to come. That is because man believes *“with the heart”*

I BECAME DUMB

¹⁵ *And when he had spoken toward the ground, and I became such words unto me, I set my face dumb.”*

Daniel will once again record his reaction to the word of the Lord. We will

More was involved in Daniel’s prayer being answered than could be detected by natural means, by Given O. Blakely

find that the flesh has gained no strength, and still is not able to hold up when touched by heavenly influences. The flesh “profits nothing,” as we will see. It will not be able to gain anything from this message. Instead of getting better, the flesh will get worse, losing both strength and capacity.

I SET MY FACE TOWARD THE GROUND

“^{15a} And when he had spoken such words unto me, I set my face toward the ground . . . ” Other versions read, “I turned my face toward the ground,”^{NKJV} “I bowed with my face toward the ground,”^{NIV} and “I kept my face turned to the earth.”^{BBE}

Notice the expression “such words.” Other versions read “according to these words,”^{NASB} and “while he was speaking these words.”^{NRSV} The verse is not intended to indicate that the message was delivered completely, for much more is going to be said. The idea is that in the middle of the communication, Daniel was greatly humbled and became unable to speak.

I gather from this response that the angel did not speak to Daniel in a conversational and unimpressive tone. Already his appearance had caused Daniel to faint, now his words have a calculated effect upon his flesh also. It also appears that the answer to Daniel’s prayer was

most unusual. A heavenly messenger was dispatched, his appearance was devastating to the flesh, and a touch from the messenger raised him to his hands and knees. He is told to stand upright, is provided with an explanation of the delay, and is told that the things he will hear will not happen for a long time. **Nothing about the whole experience conforms to the wisdom of men.** This

left him speechless. His natural powers, both of reason and of speaking, dried up in the wake of this heavenly messenger. Job had the same experience, but expressed it another way. After hearing from God, he said, “Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth” (Job 40:4).

Heavenly communication

THE FLESH “PROFITS NOTHING,” AS WE WILL SEE. IT WILL NOT BE ABLE TO GAIN ANYTHING FROM THIS MESSAGE. INSTEAD OF GETTING BETTER, THE FLESH WILL GET WORSE, LOSING BOTH STRENGTH AND CAPACITY.

is not how the flesh would deliver a message – even if it could.

I BECAME DUMB

“^{15b} . . . and I became dumb.” Other versions read, “became speechless,”^{NKJV} “was speechless,”^{NIV} “was unable to say anything,”^{BBE} “held my peace,”^{DOUAY} “held my tongue,”^{GENEVA} and “without saying a word.”^{NJB}

The idea is not that Daniel merely lost the ability to speak, but that he could think of nothing to say – the angel’s word

withers the natural capacities. Flesh is too frail to contain it. In one of the Lord’s parables, he spoke of a man who entered the wedding feast without a garment. When he was asked, “And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment?” he “was speechless” – unable to respond to the poignant words (Mat 22:12). A similar thing happened to those journeying with Saul of Tarsus. When the Lord appeared to Saul the those with him “stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man” (Acts 9:7).

MY LIPS WERE TOUCHED, AND MY MOUTH OPENED

“¹⁶ And, behold, one like the similitude of the sons of men touched my lips: then I opened my mouth, and spake, and said unto him that stood before me, O my lord, by the vision my sorrows are turned upon me, and I have retained no strength. ¹⁷ For how can the servant of this my lord talk with this my lord? for as for me, straightway there remained no strength in me, neither is there breath left in me.”

The graciousness of the Lord is seen here. As we proceed through this text, we will find this is the same angel

that had spoken to him. The great power and glory of the angel had adversely affected Daniel. Yet that powerful angel was able to be gentle with the aged prophet. **No communication could pass from Daniel to the angel until he was strengthened.**

TOUCHED MY LIPS

“^{16a} And, behold, one like the similitude of the sons of men touched my lips . . . ” Some versions say “my mouth.”^{NIV, NRSV}

This is now the fourth time Daniel has been “touched” by a heavenly being

(8:18; 9:21; 10:10,16). Each time he has regained strength. The angelic touch has not driven him further into disability, therefore confirming the beneficent intentions of the Lord.

Isaiah the prophet also experienced his lips being touched. After seeing the Lord high and lifted up, he declared he was a man of unclean lips, and dwelt in the midst of a people of unclean lips. When his lips were touched a live coal from the altar, he was told, “thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged” (Isa 6:6-7). What a marvelous thing took place in the heavenlies!

In Daniel's case, the effect was different. A touch of his lips caused him to be able to speak again. Among other things, this confirms the superiority of heaven to earth, or spirit to flesh, and of angels to men.

I SAID UNTO HIM

"^{16b} . . . then I opened my mouth, and spake, and said unto him that stood before me . . ."

Immediately, Daniel is able to

Notice that Daniel calls the angel "lord." This is "lord" in the subordinate sense, and does not refer to the Lord God. All of the versions use the word with a lower case "l," indicating this was a created being, and not the Lord of glory. Notwithstanding, this is an acknowledgment of the superiority of the angelic order to that of man. It is written that man was "made a little lower than the angels" (Psa 8:5). Zechariah, when confronted with a holy angel, called him "lord" five times (Zech 1:9; 4:4,5,13; 6:4).

out by the magnificence of this angel. The clash of spirit with flesh was evident!

When men have high estimations of themselves, it is because they do not stand in the presence of the Lord, and are unaware of His Person. He was shaken down to the core of his very person.

I Have Retained No Strength

"^{16d} . . . and I have retained no strength." Other versions read, "I was helpless,"^{NIV} "I have no more strength,"^{BEB} "cannot summon strength,"^{NK} and "retained no power."^{YLT}

This was no time to be sorrowful and weak, but yet he was. This was the impact of purity upon the man of God. And this was after Daniel had been touched. How deeply sin has affected the human constitution!

One can only imagine the impact of heavenly purity upon those who choose to live in sin! When Jesus comes in all of His glory, this kind of reaction will be magnified many times in those who knew not God and obeyed not the Gospel of Christ. How the lost will "wail because of Him" (Rev 1:7).

WHAT WILL HE SAY? WILL HE COMPLAIN? WILL HE MAKE AN EXCUSE FOR WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO HIM? INDEED, HE WILL DO PRECISELY WHAT THE WOMAN WITH THE ISSUE OF BLOOD TOLD JESUS. HE WILL TELL THE MESSENGER "ALL THE TRUTH"

speak, and knows what to say. Although he is in the presence of a messenger from heaven, he is still forward to speak, for his heart is right, and his spirit has been nurtured in the ways of the Lord. What will he say? Will he complain? Will he make an excuse for what has happened to him? Indeed, he will do precisely what the woman with the issue of blood told Jesus. He will tell the messenger "all the truth" (Mark 5:33).

My Sorrows Are Turned Upon Me

"^{16c} . . . O my lord, by the vision." Other versions read, "because of the vision,"^{NKJV} and "as a result of the vision."^{NASB}

Let me again emphasize the abrasiveness of heaven to the flesh!

Here was a gracious messenger from heaven, sent with a special answer to Daniel's prayer. Yet, the impact upon Daniel is not pleasant. This is nothing less than the result of coming short of the glory of God (Rom 3:23). Praise God, we shall be freed from this kind of response when we are forever with the Lord!

My Sorrows

" . . . my sorrows are turned upon me . . ." Other versions read, "my sorrows have overwhelmed me,"^{NKJV} "anguish has come upon me,"^{NASB} "I am overcome with anguish,"^{NIV} "such pains have come upon me,"^{NRSV} "my sorrows have returned upon me,"^{GENEVA} "I am terrified by the vision,"^{NLT} and "I have been seized with pangs."^{TNK}

Daniel had just spent three weeks mourning before the Lord and chastening himself. Prior to that, he had spent considerable time confessing his own sin and that of his people (9:20). Now the feelings of sorrow and contempt had come back upon him. The magnitude of even the subdued glory of this angel must have been remarkable. It was more than the flesh could bear. Nature was not adequate for the occasion.

Once again his "comeliness was turned" in him "into corruption." It was like the surge of a great wave coming upon him – deep calling to deep – as a sense of his own corruption was brought

How Can I Talk

"^{17a} For how can the servant of this my lord talk with this my lord?"

Daniel senses this is not a lectureship! Dialog will be required, but he does not feel as though he can do it. He was not content to remain silent, but was seeking a means to gain strength – for it takes strength to engage in heavenly dialog. However, we will find that it also takes strength to hear!

No Strength and No Breath

"^{17a} . . . for as for me, straightway there remained no strength in me, neither is there breath left in me." Fear and stupor has come over Daniel because of this August personality. It is not the fear or weakness of unbelief, but rather it is owing to his humanity. Sin has created such a chasm between the human and the Divine, that even an angel from the heavenly realm violently disrupts the whole course of nature. Although it all seems to be hopeless, Daniel is in the presence of one who can correct the situation.

More was involved in Daniel's prayer being answered than could be detected by natural means, by Given O. Blakely

BE STRONG!

“¹⁸ Then there came again and touched me one like the appearance of a man, and he strengthened me, ¹⁹ And said, O man greatly beloved, fear not: peace be unto thee, be strong, yea, be strong. And when he had spoken unto me, I was strengthened, and said, Let my lord speak; for thou hast strengthened me.”

It is as though the angel subdues his glory, appearing more as a man than as an angel, thereby reducing the affects of his person and message upon Daniel.

ANOTHER TOUCH

“^{18a} Then there came again and touched me one like the appearance of a man, and he strengthened me . . . ”

This is the fifth time Daniel has been touched – the third time on this occasion. A certain progression can be seen in this confrontation – from strength to strength (Psa 84:7). The important thing to see in this is that the angel did not give Daniel initial strength, leaving him to increase it on his own. The beginning of the strength came from a supernatural touch, and the increase of it did as well.

Here we have a confirmation of the manner of Divine working. From the New Covenant point of view, it is encapsulated in these words: *“I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last”* (Rev 22:13). And again, *“Looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our faith”* (Heb 12:2). And again, *“Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ”* (Phil 1:6).

The flesh cannot perfect what God has begun. Whatever the Lord starts, He also must finish, else it will not be completed. Whether Daniel would have said it in these words or not, he sensed the truth of them. He knew he would get nothing from this angelic dialog if he was not made strong.

PEACE BE UNTO THEE

“^{19a} And said, O man greatly

beloved, fear not: peace be unto thee . . . ”

The manner in which the angel speaks and conducts himself confirms that he is acquainted with the human condition. He knew what was required, and quickly addressed the situation.

“O man,” addresses the reason for the need of strength. It is our manhood that is our chief weakness – our natural association with Adam. While some may boast that they have not done anything particularly wrong, they still are far short of the prophet Daniel, against whom not a single sin is recorded. Yet he

nothing to fear.” These words carry the spirit of Jeremiah 29:11: *“For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.”* Four times Jesus spoke words carrying the same import: *“Be not afraid”* (Matt 14:27; 17:7; Mk 6:50; John 6:20).

BE STRONG! BE STRONG!

“^{19b} . . . be strong, yea, be strong.” Other versions read, *“take courage and be courageous,”* ^{NASB} *“Be strong NOW; be strong,”* ^{NIV} *“Be strong and courageous,”* ^{NRSV} and *“Be strong and let your heart be lifted up.”* ^{BBE}

“GREATLY BELOVED” JUSTIFIES THE REASON FOR THE ANGEL COMING WITH A MESSAGE. SUCH HOLY PERSONALITIES ARE NOT SENT FORTH INDISCRIMINATELY. THEY KNOW NOTHING OF THE EVERYONE-IS-THE-SAME MENTALITY THAT HAS CREPT INTO THE CHURCH.

was shaken to the core by the angelic confrontation.

“Greatly beloved” justifies the reason for the angel coming with a message. Such holy personalities are not sent forth indiscriminately. They know nothing of the everyone-is-the-same mentality that has crept into the church. Everyone is not *“greatly beloved,”* and thus everyone is not the same. The angel’s use of *“greatly beloved”* was no doubt used to quiet Daniel’s spirit and calm his heart. He knew that good things are brought from God to those who are loved greatly by Him.

“Fear not” confirms this was a mission of mercy, not of judgment. This is another way of saying “You have

This is moral and spiritual strength, and not mere physical strength. It is when the heart is strengthened, and courage rises within that the body experiences rejuvenation. This kind of strength is the opposite of being fainthearted and timorous. It moves fear out of the prominent position, causing both heart and mind to be alert and in a state of readiness.

SPEAK, FOR THOU HAST STRENGTHENED ME

“^{19c} . . . And when he had spoken unto me, I was strengthened, and said, Let my lord speak; for thou hast strengthened me.”

No sooner had the angel spoken than Daniel became stronger. He was no longer overcome with sorrow, weakness,

More was involved in Daniel’s prayer being answered than could be detected by natural means, by Given O. Blakely

or fear. Now he was ready to hear the word what was being brought to him – ready to receive the understanding that would be imparted to him.

There are messages that require great strength to receive. They cannot find lodging in a divided hard or a double mind. When the Lord interrogated Job, He started by saying, “Gird up now thy

loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me” (Job 38:3; 40:7). When Habukkuk heard of the impending Babylonian captivity he said, “*When I heard, my belly trembled; my lips quivered at the voice: rottenness entered into my bones, and I trembled in myself; that I might rest in the day of trouble: when he cometh up unto the people, he will invade them with his troops*” (Hab

3:16).

Daniel is also going to hear some hard words. He will hear of a despot that does his own will, with none being able to withstand him (11:16). He will hear of a “vile person” who will “obtain the kingdom by flatteries” (11:21), and have a heart that “shall be against the holy covenant” (11:28). Daniel must be strong to receive such words.

A RETURN TO FIGHT AND A REVELATION OF TRUTH

“²⁰ Then said he, Knowest thou wherefore I come unto thee? and now will I return to fight with the prince of Persia: and when I am gone forth, lo, the prince of Grecia shall come. ²¹ But I will show thee that which is noted in the scripture of truth: and there is none that holdeth with me in these things, but

wherefore I come unto thee?” Other versions read, “Do you know why I have come to you?”^{NKJV} “Do you understand why I came to you?”^{NASB}

Before proceeding any further the messenger checks for the alertness of the prophet. He asks if he knows why he came to him. The jarring effects of the angel’s

words be understood.

I WILL RETURN TO FIGHT

“^{20b} . . . and now will I return to fight with the prince of Persia . . .” Other versions read, “And now I must return to fight with the prince of Persia,”^{NKJV} “Soon I will return to fight against the prince of Persia,”^{NIV} “Soon I must return to fight against the spirit prince of the kingdom of Persia,”^{NLT} and “and now I turn back to fight with the head of Persia.”^{YLT}

What a fierce opponent this angel had been fighting! Michael, one of the “chief princes,” had come to help him, freeing him up to come to Daniel after twenty-one days of battle. But the evil prince had not been deposed. The threat he posed to the people and work of God had not yet been overthrown. The angel “must” return and resume the battle. We will learn from the text that it would be a battle of significant duration.

We ought to note that great advances in the earth are often preceded by heavenly engagements of the foe. **When things go well for us, there may very well have been some significant angelic warfare required for us to have those good times.**

Satan and his hosts are weak compared to God and the Lord Jesus Christ – but not when compared with men. After all, Satan has succeeded in deceiving “the whole world” (1 John 5:19). We are presently living in a country in which the rulers of the darkness of this world have toppled values some thought could never be removed. Perhaps because

HE DOES NOT WANT THE PROPHET TO MISS ANYTHING HE SAYS, SO HE ONCE AGAIN SETS HIS MISSION BEFORE HIM. THERE IS NO PURPOSE TO REVELATION IF THERE IS NO ALERTNESS ON THE PART OF MAN AND CLARITY ON THE PART OF THE MESSENGER.

Michael your prince.”

Here the angel accommodates himself to Daniel’s weakened condition. He does not want the prophet to miss anything he says, so he once again sets his mission before him. **There is no purpose to revelation if there is no alertness on the part of man and clarity on the part of the messenger.**

DO YOU KNOW?

“^{20a} Then said he, Knowest thou

appearance could have caused Daniel to forget why this mighty angel was before him. After all, he had clearly identified his mission earlier (verses 12-14). Here the angel does what Peter did, stirring up the pure mind of the prophet (2 Pet 3:1).

We learn from this that angels are not content to simply blurt out their messages. Like their God, they speak to be understood, and they desire their message to be comprehended. I have found that when we walk in the light, we cultivate this same attitude, desiring that our

More was involved in Daniel’s prayer being answered than could be detected by natural means, by Given O. Blakely

there are not fervent and effective prayers within the church, this situation is raging out of control.

THE PRINCE OF GRECIA

^{20b} . . . and when I am gone forth, lo, the prince of Grecia shall come.” Other versions read, “and when I have gone forth, the prince of Greece will come,” ^{NKJV} “so I am going forth, and behold, the prince of Greece is about to come,” ^{NIV} and “and when I am through with him, the prince of Greece will come,” ^{NRSV}

This is the explanation for the fall of Persia and the rise of Greece. Remember, this very displacement of Persia was declared in the dream of Nebuchadnezzar. Persia was depicted as the “*breast and arms of silver*,” to be replaced by another third kingdom of brass that would “*bear rule over all the earth*” (2:32-39). This was seen as the Divinely appointed progression toward the Kingdom to be set up by God, which would never be destroyed.

The same displacement was again expounded in Daniel’s vision of the four beasts. In that vision Persia was depicted as the second beast, a ruthless bear, and Greece as the third beast, a swift leopard with wings on its back and four heads. The leopard succeeded the bear, with dominion being “*given to it*” (7:3-6). This vision emphasized the beastly or ruthless nature of the kingdoms. They would gain their dominion through aggressive military means.

The very same displacement was again portrayed with the focus upon Persia and Greece. Persia was depicted as a pushing ram with two horns, and Greece was a he goat with a single great horn. The he goat attacked the ram, breaking its horns, throwing it to the ground and ferociously trampling him. None could deliver the ram out of the hands of the he goat, or Persia from Greece. This emphasized the kingdoms from the standpoint of their rulers.

But now the angel has revealed yet another perspective of these two kingdoms. Both of them were being governed by spiritual forces – and they were not good. The “*prince of Persia*” and “*the prince of Grecia*” were spiritual powers, battling for the dominance.

Now the angel declares he is going to return to the battle with “*the prince of Persia*.” After his overthrow, Persia would be replaced by Greece. **The change of political power would be the direct result of angelic conflict.**

Greece took the dominion from Persia under the military leadership of

competing worldly powers.

Thus, the angelic hosts are dispatched to do what men could not do. After a fierce and long battle, and at just the right time, there was a shift in power. All of this was preparing the way for the coming of Christ. There were global kingdoms, and global proclamations of the

THUS, THE ANGELIC HOSTS ARE DISPATCHED TO DO WHAT MEN COULD NOT DO. AFTER A FIERCE AND LONG BATTLE, AND AT JUST THE RIGHT TIME, THERE WAS A SHIFT IN POWER. ALL OF THIS WAS PREPARING THE WAY FOR THE COMING OF CHRIST.

Alexander the Great. That would take place around 336 B.C. – **over two hundred years after this message was delivered to Daniel** (537 B.C.)!

If the angel had been fighting with the Persian prince prior to coming to Daniel, and was to return and resume the battle, ponder the implications. That would mean there was a battle that lasted about two hundred years, for after it was over “*the prince of Grecia will come!*”

This indicates the strength of both Persia and Greece. **They were dominated by spiritual forces that engaged the mightiest of angels – possibly as long as two centuries.**

The Implications

There are Messianic implications in this account. From Satan’s viewpoint, this was an initiative to stop the God of heaven from setting up His Kingdom – the Kingdom of Christ, upon whose shoulder the government would be placed. His effort was obviously to establish global kingdoms that would forbid the fulfillment of God’s promise. The kingdoms were so powerful, being ruled by princes of darkness, that they could not possibly have been removed by

God of the Hebrews that paved the way for the Savior of the world.

THE SCRIPTURE OF TRUTH

^{21a} *But I will show thee that which is noted in the scripture of truth.*” Other versions read, “*the writing of truth*,” ^{NASB} “*the Book of Truth*,” ^{NIV}

What is “*the Scripture*,” or “*Book of Truth*?” It is not the Scriptures as normally perceived – or the Bible. These things had not been written on earth. That is why the angel was sent to inform Daniel of them. These are parallel to the “*book*” of Divine purpose that was opened by the Lord Jesus (Rev 5:1-9). It is the Book of Divine purpose and determination. The angel was saying, “I will show you what God has determined upon your people – what destiny has been determined for them.”

Among other things, this strikes down the notion that God has ceased to have any purposes for the Jews. The “*Scripture of truth*” is not altered, nor is it subject to change. That is signified by the seven seals of the book in Revelation. It was so tightly closed that no one knew what was in the book. Only the Lamb could unlock it. This condition forbids any change of the plan, for change could only

THE MATTER OF WHICH THE ANGEL SPEAKS IS THE CONFLICT WITH THE PRINCE AND KINGS OF PERSIA. IT IS EVIDENT THAT GOD DID NOT SEEK FOR A SWIFT AND DECISIVE VICTORY HERE AS WITH THE ARMIES OF SENNACHERIB. THIS WAS AN EXTENSIVE AND CRITICAL BATTLE WAGED BY TWO MIGHTY ANGELS, PAVING THE WAY FOR THE COMING OF THE SAVIOR.

be required if the plan became known and thwarted – both of which are impossible.

ONLY MICHAEL, YOUR PRINCE

^{21b} . . . and there is none that holdeth with me in these things, but Michael your prince.” Other versions read, “No one upholds me against these except Michael your prince,”^{NKJV} “there is no one who stands firmly with me against these forces except Michael your prince,”^{NASB} and “And there is not one strengthening himself with me,

concerning these, except Michael your head.”^{YLT}

This passage confirms that the ways of God are often “past finding out” (Rom 11:33). One might imagine that God would send “twelve legions of angels” to cast down “the prince of Persia.” After all, that many were available to the Lord Jesus (Matt 26:53) – and there are many more than that. It is written that there are “many angels” around the throne, even “ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands” (Rev 5:11).

Yet, here is a case where only one angel who sided with Israel. Of course, it was the prince, or archangel, Michael.

Perhaps Michael was the angel that stood between the Egyptians the Israelites as they readied to cross the Red Sea (Ex 14:19). He might very well have been the one God sent before Israel to bring them to the promised land (Ex 23:23,34). He is their “prince,” and stands up for them, being their defender.

The matter of which the angel speaks is the conflict with the prince and kings of Persia. It is evident that God did not seek for a swift and decisive victory here as with the armies of Sennacherib. This was an extensive and critical battle waged by two mighty angels, paving the way for the coming of the Savior.

This should also settle all disputes about Israel being totally cast off. If that is the case, Gabriel is no longer their prince. Angels are not represented in such a manner. Further, Daniel is told that close to the resurrection of the dead, Michael will “stand up, that great prince that standeth for the children of thy people” (12:1-2).

CONCLUSION

Thus the Spirit has opened something of what is involved in the government of this world by God, and now through Christ Jesus. Nothing has been left to happenstance. Further, Satan is aggressive in the governments of this world, seeking to overturn the purpose of God and frustrate His desires. But his efforts are all vain, and will come to nought.

Every child of God has reason to be of good cheer. “The battle is the Lord’s” (1 Sam 17:47). It will not be long, as He will bruise Satan under our feet (Rom 16:20). Then all of the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ (Rev 11:15). Then, He will give them to the saints, who will possess the kingdom, with all of its magnificence, reigning forever with Him (Dan 7:27; Rev 22:5).

IT IS ALSO GOOD TO LEARN FROM THIS LESSON THAT DELAYED ANSWERS TO PRAYER MIGHT VERY WELL INVOLVE SOME BATTLES IN HIGH PLACES. IF THE ANSWER IS SLOW IN COMING, KEEP PRAYING AS DANIEL. AS WITH HIM, YOUR WORDS ARE NO DOUBT HEARD FROM THE VERY FIRST.

Let us be alert to what is happening in our world. When oppressive kingdoms are displaced, let us be quick to give God glory, for He is the one who has

cast them down.

It is also good to learn from this lesson that delayed answers to prayer

More was involved in Daniel’s prayer being answered than could be detected by natural means, by Given O. Blakely

might very well involve some battles in high places. If the answer is slow in coming, keep praying as Daniel. As with him, your words are no doubt heard from

the very first. However, if you are praying about critical matters associated with the purpose of God, it has no doubt aggravated the hosts of darkness, who are

set to resist that will. As you pray, rest assured that heavenly hosts are doing battle in your behalf. Your prayers mingle well with their efforts.

Our next Hungry Saints Meeting will be held on Friday, 3/21/2003. We will continue in our overview of Daniel, reviewing verses 1-6 of the eleventh chapter. The title of our lesson is, **"THE TRUTH IS UNFOLDED TO DANIEL, #1."** The heavenly messenger begins to unfold the future, opening truth concerning several kings. He shows God to be imminent in the affairs of men. Our meeting will begin at 7:00 P.M. You are invited to bring your family and friends for fellowship around the Word of God. Refreshments are served afterward, with a time of extended fellowship for everyone.

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